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HEMET-RYAN AIRPORT  
LAND USE PLAN

Approved by the  
Riverside County Planning Commission  
on  
March 14, 1979

Approved by the  
Riverside County Board of Supervisors  
on  
June 10, 1980

  
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## INTRODUCTION

The California State Legislature, in response to public pressures to solve real and potential airport-related problems, created a requirement for counties to establish Airport Land Use Commissions. These Commissions were to formulate a land use plan for each public use airport that would permit the orderly growth of the airport and would safeguard the general welfare of the inhabitants within the vicinity of the airport.<sup>1</sup> The Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) was established December 14, 1970 by the Board of Supervisors acting in conjunction with the Mayors of the cities in the County.

The ALUC adopted Rules and Regulations in 1971 (Appendix A). These guidelines defined the method for determining the extent of airport influence based upon noise and flight safety considerations. The guidelines also encouraged local agencies to prepare and implement land use plans for those portions of the airport-influenced areas within their jurisdiction. The ALUC then planned to review and integrate the separate area plans into the comprehensive land use plan required by State law.

An interim airport-influenced area around the Hemet-Ryan Airport was designated by the ALUC August 30, 1973. At that time, the ALUC asked the City of Hemet and the County Planning Department to prepare airport area land use plans. Higher priority work in both agencies, and the fact that existing land use then appeared to be compatible with the airport, precluded response to the ALUC's request. Recent pressures for urban development, however, have created the need to complete the plan. As a result, the Airport Land Use Commission and the City of Hemet and the County have entered into a cooperative effort to prepare this policy plan. The plan, as presented here is a single purpose document addressing airport noise and safety considerations only. Though this plan is adopted prior to adoption of updates of the Hemet and Riverside County General Plans, it is not intended to be used as an independent document. It is to be utilized as a supplement to the existing General Plans. The policies expressed in this plan are unique to the Hemet-Ryan Airport and are to be integrated into the City of Hemet's Southwest Specific Plan and General Plan, and Riverside County's Hemet-San Jacinto Area Plan. When they are completed, the Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission will adopt this document as well as relevant portions of the City and County plans as a comprehensive airport land use plan pursuant to Section 21675 of the California Public Utilities Code.

## NEED FOR AN AIRPORT LAND USE PLAN

The Hemet-Ryan Airport provides adequate facilities for business, recreation, and fire suppression use and represents a sizeable capital investment in land, buildings, and structures. Businesses using the airport employ approximately 145 persons. It has been estimated that activities at the airport provided \$6,200,000 to the local economy in 1975.<sup>2</sup>

Aviation and business activities at the airport provide about \$125,000 annually in revenue to the County. This money is used to maintain and improve not only the Hemet-Ryan Airport, but other county-owned airports. Additionally, aviation users who base their privately owned aircraft at the airport and businesses leasing property at the airport pay about \$20,000 annually in personal property and possessory interest taxes.

The airport is an integral part of the National Airport System Plan as well as the State, SCAG, and County Transportation Plans. As such, the airport is eligible to receive federal and state financial grants to subsidize major improvements. As a condition of accepting these grants, the County must give assurances that it will protect certain areas around the airport from encroachments that could interfere with flight operations. The most critical areas are the "runway clear zones" immediately off the ends of the runway. Part 152 of the Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR) pertaining to federal aid for airport development defines these areas. This regulation requires that an applicant for aid to build, improve, or repair runways must own, acquire, or agree to acquire adequate property interests for runway clear zones.

Beyond the critical "runway clear zones," Part 77 of the Federal Aviation Regulations prohibit the penetration of certain "imaginary" surfaces associated with the airport's runways in order to protect the approach paths to the runways from obstructions, reflections, smoke, or electrical devices capable of generating interference. The County has, by accepting grants in the past from the FAA and the State, given assurance to both agencies that it will protect these areas. County Ordinance 448, An Ordinance of the County of Riverside Establishing Airport Operating Areas and Regulating Height Standards and Limits Therein, provides this protection for unincorporated areas around the Hemet-Ryan Airport.

Aircraft activities at the airport present potential safety hazards under the approach and departure paths. The responsibility to protect citizens from potential hazards such as aircraft crashes or the accidental drop of fire retardants must be recognized. In addition, aircraft create noise that transcends the airport boundary and political jurisdictions. So long as human activities are at a minimum within these noise impacted areas, problems are also minimal. At the Hemet-Ryan Airport, noise incompatibilities created by aircraft have not been serious because the area surrounding the airport has been relatively free from intensive human activities. However, recent development pressures have arisen in both the City of Hemet and the County to permit urbanization of the airport area. These pressures make it essential that policies and criteria be established that will recognize the problems created by noise impacts on humans.

#### NOISE CONSIDERATIONS

There are several guidelines to assist in establishing the necessary policies to prevent incompatibilities brought about by human activities in noise impacted areas. Applicable guidelines are as follows:

- The Federal Environmental Protection Agency, based on various studies, has determined that a maximum noise environment of 55 dB day/night level ( $L_{dn}$ ) is required to state with complete assurance that the noise is not detrimental to health or welfare.
- The State's Noise Standards for Airports<sup>3</sup> establishes a criterion of 65 dB Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) as the level of noise "acceptable to a reasonable person residing in the vicinity of the airport."<sup>4</sup> The State further requires that by 1986, no incompatible uses be permitted within the 65 dB CNEL contour around airports, unless mitigation measures are taken. Less stringent standards apply in the interim.

- The Riverside County Noise Element establishes 60 dB L<sub>dn</sub> as the maximum desirable noise level for residential uses. The City of Hemet, based on their relatively quiet environment and the retirement character of the city has adopted the 55 dB L<sub>dn</sub> noise contour as the standard for residential use in the Noise Element of their General Plan.

In selecting the 65 dB criterion, Section 5005 of Title 21 of the California Public Utilities Code states the 65 dB is the:

"level of noise acceptable to a reasonable person residing in the vicinity of an airport . . . . This criterion level has been chosen for reasonable persons residing in urban residential areas . . . . It is recognized that there is a considerable individual variability in the reaction to noise. Further, there are several factors which undoubtedly influence this variability and which are not thoroughly understood. Therefore, this criterion level does not have a degree of precision which is often associated with engineering criteria for a physical phenomenon . . . ."

It is reasonable to consider in certain environments, land use policies in areas impacted by noise levels less than the level established in the State Noise Standard for Aircraft. The area around the Hemet-Ryan Airport is an example. Here the ambient noise level is generally quieter than in more urban areas. As a result, noise generated by aircraft is more intrusive. Also, the predominant residential character of the area is toward retirement living, mobilehome parks, and extensive use of outdoor areas. The great importance that Hemet citizens place on their quiet residential character is evidenced by the existing noise element of the City General Plan.

As previously stated, the EPA's 55dB noise standard is the level at which they can state with complete assurance that noise will have no detrimental effects on the public health and welfare. It is thus a very conservative standard and was felt to be overly restrictive for enforcement on the basis of average noise alone. However, due to flight patterns at Hemet-Ryan Airport the 55 dB noise contour generally covers the area within which aircraft will operate at relatively low altitudes. Due to the prevailing quiet background, the noise generated by these overflights will be intrusive and annoying. The relatively low altitudes maintained by aircraft within this area will also result in increased awareness of aircraft activities. The seasonal nature of operations at Hemet-Ryan Airport will create additional noise incompatibilities. The major source of noise at the airport is the fire bomber activities, which generally occur during a three month period starting late summer. Since the noise contours represent annual averages, noise levels will be much greater at this time, which is also when people spend more time outdoors and are more likely to be bothered by noise.

It is recognized that CNEL and L<sub>dn</sub> noise contours represent predictions of average noise levels based upon the best available information. Further, the estimated contours are depicted as curved lines on a map. Pinpointing or legally describing the exact location of a specific contour can only be done by a series of noise measurements over an extended period of time. On the other hand, predictive noise contours when used as a planning guide are useful in depicting general areas of noise concern.

Influence Areas. To recognize the multiple concerns related to airport operations, noise, and surrounding land use, two Influence Areas have been delineated. The areas were defined by average noise levels and the flight patterns and type of equipment utilized at Hemet-Ryan Airport. Influence Area 1 includes the area within which aircraft operate at relatively low altitudes and noise generated by overflights will be intrusive. The 55 dB noise contour predicted to exist in 1986 outlines this area, except in the area west of the midsection line of Section 23 and south of the midsection line of Section 25 where higher altitudes are normally attained. Influence Area 2 includes the areas within which noise will have significant detrimental effects on residential and other noise sensitive uses. This is defined in areas within either the 60 dB Ldn noise contour predicted to exist in 1986 or the approach and departure path extensions, as defined in Part 77 of the Federal Aviation Authority regulations, to a surface height of 150 feet. Influence Areas 1 and 2 are shown on page five.

## OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

### Land Use Objective

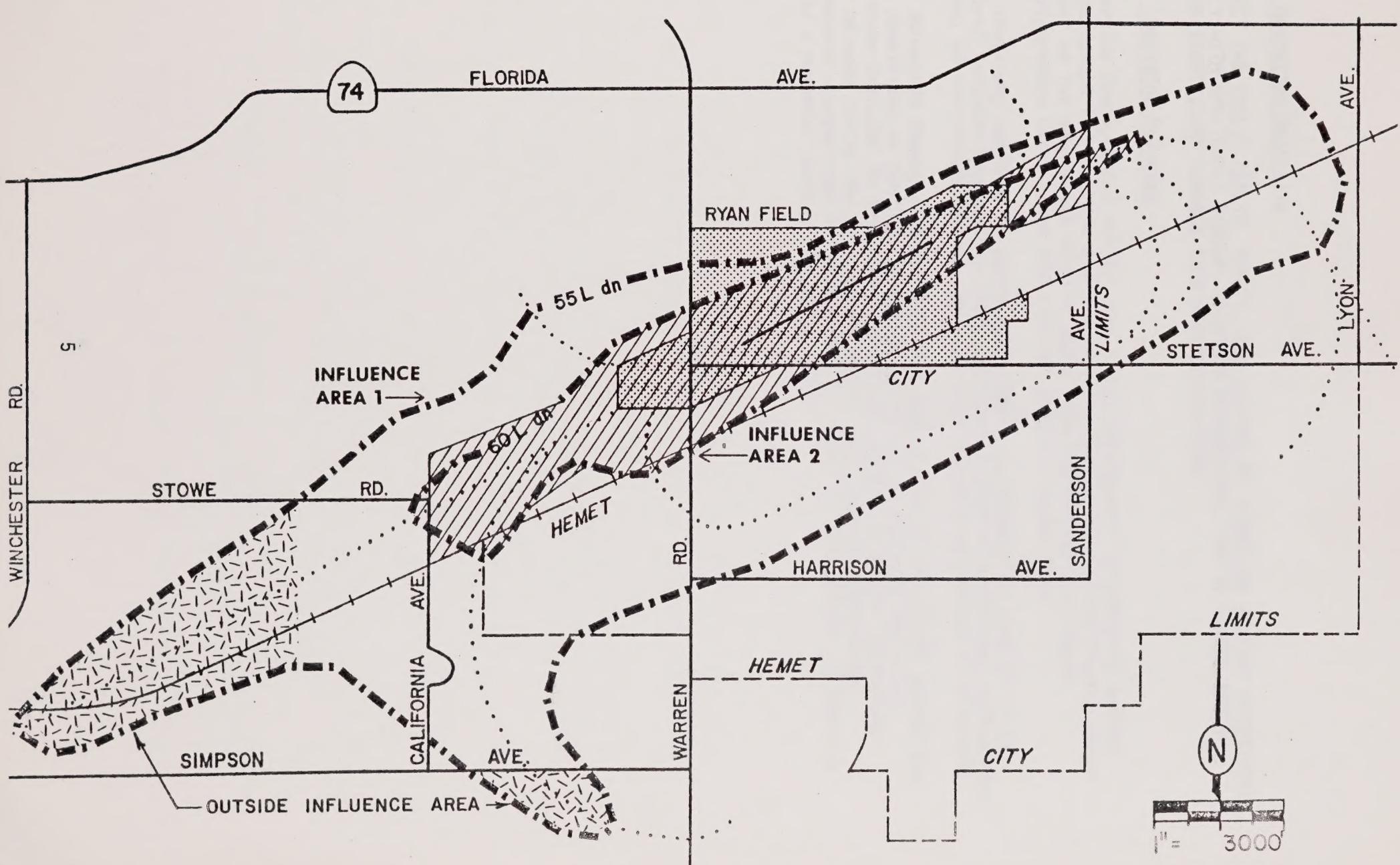
TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE BY DEFINING APPROPRIATE USES IN AREAS INFLUENCED BY THE HEMET-RYAN AIRPORT.

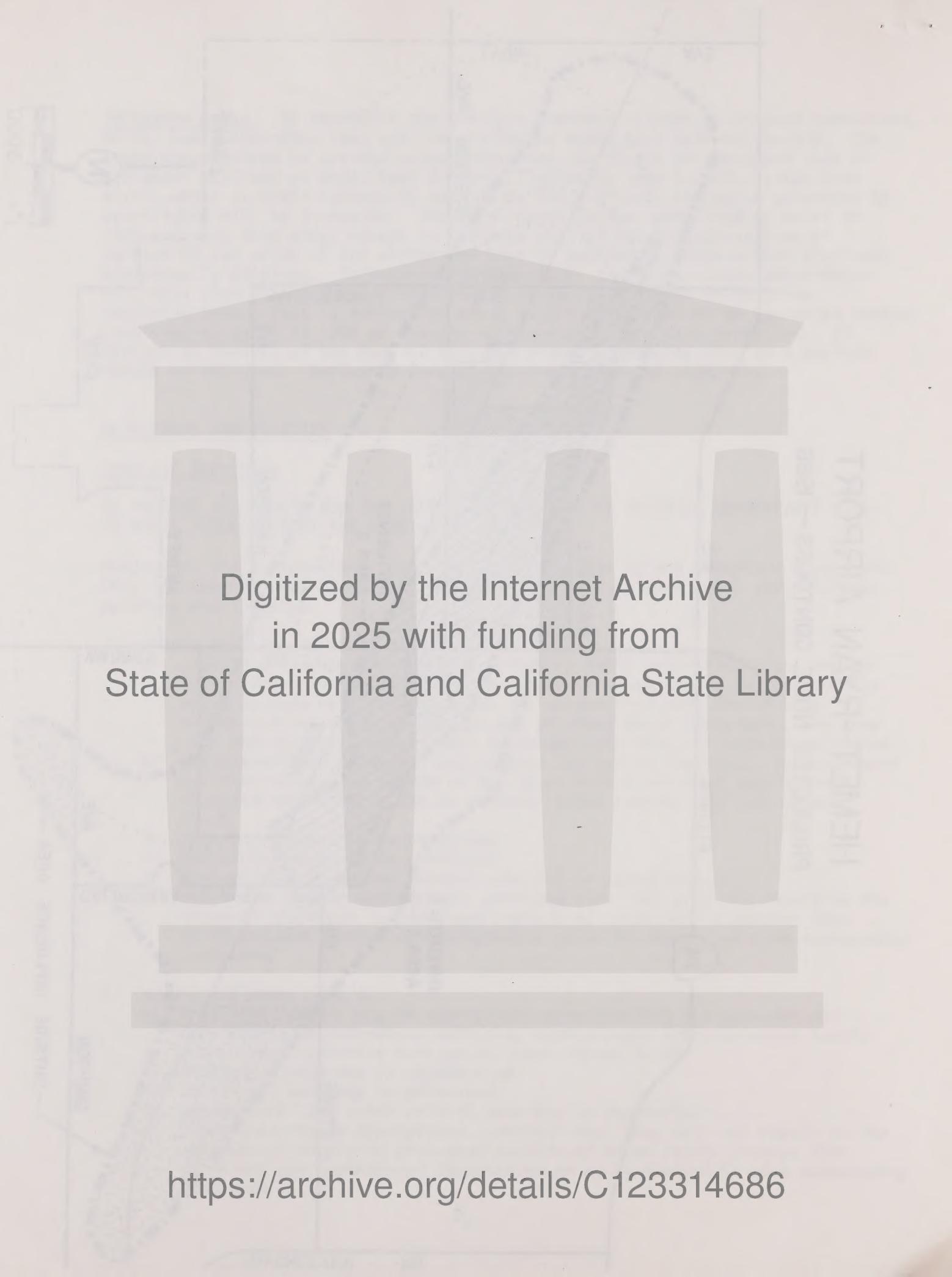
*Subject to the designations, policies, and proposals of the Riverside County and City of Hemet General Plans, and the Hemet-San Jacinto Area Plan, the following policies shall apply:*

1. *Within Influence Area 1:*
  - a) transient lodging and very low intensity rural residential uses may be appropriate provided that average interior noise levels due to exterior noise sources will not exceed 45 dB, except that very low density residential uses may be appropriate in areas where topography, distance from the airport, and attained altitudes will mitigate airport influence.
  - b) noise sensitive uses such as, but not limited to hospitals, convalescent and rest homes, and libraries may be permitted provided that average interior noise levels due to exterior noise sources will not exceed 45 dB.
  - c) commercial uses may be permitted.
  - d) industrial uses may be permitted.
  - e) agricultural and other related uses may be appropriate.
  - f) other uses may be appropriate, provided that they will not result in the exposure of people to prolonged periods of noise levels greater than 60 dB and are located and designed so as to be compatible with surrounding land uses.
2. *Within Influence Area 2:*
  - a) transient lodging may be appropriate except within the approach and departure path extensions providing that average interior noise levels due to exterior noise sources will not exceed 45 dB.
  - b) commercial uses may be appropriate.
  - c) industrial uses may be permitted.
  - d) agricultural and other related uses may be appropriate.
  - e) other uses may be appropriate, provided that they will not result in the exposure of people to prolonged periods of noise levels greater than 60 dB and are located and designed so as to be compatible with surrounding land uses.

# HEMET-RYAN AIRPORT

## PROJECTED NOISE CONTOURS — 1986





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### Airport Operation Objective

TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE BY REQUIRING AIRPORT OPERATIONS TO COMPLY WITH APPLICABLE FEDERAL AVIATION REGULATIONS, AND TO ASSURE PUBLIC REVIEW OF SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN AIRPORT OPERATIONS.

### Airport Operation Policies

1. *Riverside County shall control the future development of property defined in paragraph 152.9 of the Federal Aviation Regulations as the "runway clear zones" at the Hemet-Ryan Airport based upon the airport's ultimate configuration depicted on the official Airport Layout Plan.*
2. *The imaginary surfaces at Hemet-Ryan Airport as defined in Part 77 of the Federal Aviation Regulations will be protected from obstructions, reflections, smoke, or electrical devices capable of generated interference to aircraft.*
3. *The Riverside County Airports Director should control the flight operations and facilities at Hemet-Ryan Airport so as not to increase the noise contours included in this plan. Temporary changes in flight operations may be made during the fire season and in the event of emergencies; permanent changes must be approved by the Board of Supervisors if there is to be a material increase in noise levels.*

## References

1. California Public Utilities Code, Article 3.5, Chapter 4, Part I, Division 9, added by Stats, 1967 Ch. 852, as subsequently amended.
2. "A Study of the Economic Benefits of the Hemet-Ryan Airport for Hemet/San Jacinto Valley." Riverside County Airports Department, - 1976.
3. State Business Regulations, Section 5005, (Register 70, No. 48-11-28-70) Title 4, Chapter 9, Subchapter 6, "Noise Standards."
4. Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) is a noise description system. It averages single event noise levels over a 24 hour period and provides a penalty in the averaging process for evening and night events.
5. Day/Night Noise Level ( $L_{dn}$ ) is a noise description system nearly identical to the CNEL system. CNEL and  $L_{dn}$  are considered identical for the purposes of this plan.

APPENDIX A  
RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE  
RIVERSIDE COUNTY AIRPORT LAND USE COMMISSION  
ADOPTED AND EFFECTIVE AS OF JULY 26, 1971

The State of California, in 1970, enacted a law requiring the formation in Riverside County of an Airport Land Use Commission. The authority, powers, duties and limitations of the Commission shall be as defined in the California PUBLIC UTILITIES CODE, Division 9, Part 1, Chapter 4, Article 3.5, commencing with Section 21670. In Riverside County the Airport Land Use Commission consists of seven members - the five member County Airport Commission plus two members elected at large by the Committee of Mayors of the cities in Riverside County.

In accordance with the authority with which it has been invested, and in performance of the duties with which it has been charged, the Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission hereby adopts and promulgates the following rules:

ARTICLE I. OBJECTIVE. It shall be the objective of the Commission to promote the orderly development of each public airport and its area of influence in such manner as to safeguard both the welfare of the inhabitants in such areas and the interests of the general public as well as to encourage the growth of air commerce.

ARTICLE II. DEFINITIONS. As used in these rules, the following words shall have the meanings as indicated:

"airport" -- An area of ground designated and intended for the taking-off and/or landing of aircraft. Heliports and seaports both will be considered to be airports for the purposes of implementing these rules and formulating land use plans.

"airport-influenced area" -- An area, around each specified airport, that is designated by the Commission and which is, or reasonably may become, affected by airport-related noise, fumes or other influence, or which may be now or in the future, a site for a hazard to aerial navigation.

"commission" -- The Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission.

"heliport" -- An area designated and intended for the taking-off and landing of helicopters or other types of aircraft capable of vertical ascent and descent, whether or not the area is located on a building or a platform.

"local zoning authority" -- The County, a city, more than one city, or a combination of the county and cities which have the authority to zone all or any part of the land which has been designated by the Commission as being in the airport-influenced area.

"public use airport" -- Any airport which offers the use of its facilities by the public in general without prior notice and without specific invitation or clearance. Ownership of the airport, whether public or private, is not a factor. An airport owner may discriminate against use by a size or type of aircraft for which the facilities are not adequate without altering the status of the airport as "public-use".

"private use airport" -- Any airport, regardless of type of ownership, which allows use of its facilities only by the owner and his invitees.

"stolport" -- An area intended and designated for the taking-off and landing of "Short-Take-Off-and-Landing" type of aircraft.

"type (of airport) -- "types" of airports are enumerated by the Federal Aviation Regulations and are related to runway lengths, width, bearing strength and obstruction clearance; therefore, "type" of airport is directly related to the numbers, sizes and categories of aircraft that can be accommodated.

### ARTICLE III. AIRPORT-INFLUENCED AREAS.

SECTION 3.1 DESIGNATION. An airport-influenced area shall be designated around each public use airport in Riverside County. The size and shape of the area shall be determined on the basis of the type of airport that has been designated for the particular site, according to the ultimate development as shown in the Riverside County General Plan of Airports. For each public use airport in the county, existing as well as later developed, there shall be drawn a scaled plan showing the airport's runways. Oriented to each runway on the plan will be drawn two contour lines. One contour line will depict the outer extremity of the noise impact boundary allowable for the particular airport in accordance with the NOISE STANDARDS of the California Administrative Code. The second contour line will depict the outer limits of those portions of the airport imaginary surfaces, as defined and illustrated in Part 77 of the FEDERAL AVIATION REGULATIONS, extending up to and including 149 feet above the official elevation of the airport reference point.

The airport-influenced area shall be deemed to include all the property situated inside of either contour as depicted on the plan.

SECTION 3.2 INTERIM DESIGNATION OF AIRPORT-INFLUENCED AREAS. In order to provide some immediate guidance to local zoning authority, pending the adoption of a comprehensive land use plan for each public use airport in the County, the Commission shall designate "Interim Airport-Influenced Areas". The "interim" classification will be placed on the areas which, in the judgment of the Commission, are, or may be, critical for future planning purposes. The imposition of an "interim airport-influenced area" classification will not require that local zoning authority refer zone changes within the critical area to the Commission. However, the Commission and its staff will be available to offer guidance and advice upon request.

SECTION 3.3 DEFINING BOUNDARIES. The planning boundaries of airport-influenced areas shall be established by the Commission after hearing and consultation with the affected local zoning authorities. The boundaries, both in the interim stage as well as the final adopted plan, shall be defined to the maximum practicable extent by utilizing prominent features or landmarks of a permanent nature such as roads, power lines, railroad tracks, developed properties, etc.

It is the intent of the Commission to make it possible for individual property owners to quickly and easily ascertain whether a particular parcel of property is located in the airport-influenced area.

#### ARTICLE IV. FORMULATION OF LAND USE PLAN

SECTION 4.1 PURPOSE. The Commission shall formulate a comprehensive land use plan for all airport-influenced areas in the County, as required by State Law, by utilizing the following documents as primary sources of information:

General Plans, Specific Plans, Zoning Maps and Ordinances of Local Planning Authorities

Riverside County General Plan of Airports

California Administrative Code, Chapter 9, Title 4, Subchapter 6, NOISE STANDARDS

Federal Aviation Regulations, Part 77, OBJECTS AFFECTING NAVIGABLE AIRSPACE

The land use plan shall reflect the anticipated 20-year growth of each airport and shall be consistent with the State Master Airport Plan. Representatives of the airport owner and the local zoning authorities will be asked to cooperate with the Commission and to provide expertise regarding the local areas. It is intended that the local zoning authorities that are affected by an area land use plan shall assist in the development of the plan.

SECTION 4.2 FACTORS IN LAND USE PLAN FORMULATION. The land use plan may consider, but not be limited to, such factors as compatible land use, building heights, soundproofing of buildings and ground access to airports.

Land use designation and standards established by the individual local planning authorities shall be used, as appropriate, to the maximum extent. Preparation of each land use plan shall be a cooperative effort of the Commission's staff and the representatives of the local zoning authority.

SECTION 4.3 ADOPTION OF THE PLAN. The Land Use Plan for each airport-influenced area, when it has been approved and adopted by the Commission, shall constitute the Commission's recommendation for land use to the local planning agencies. Prior to adopting each land use plan, the Commission shall hold a public hearing in accordance with ARTICLE VI. MEETINGS.

ARTICLE V. IMPLEMENTATION OF LAND USE PLANS. Local zoning authorities will be encouraged and requested to implement the provisions of the Land Use Plan, as recommended by the Commission, for their particular areas by adopting appropriate zoning or other regulatory measures.

SECTION 5.1 CONSISTENT ACTION. Changes in the zoning regulations or maps by the local authorities, which are consistent with the plan approved by the Commission, shall not call for review or action by the Commission. However, a report of the action and final result of the local zoning authority shall be forwarded to the Commission's office for the Commission's files.

SECTION 5.2. INCONSISTENT ACTION. When changes in the zoning regulations or maps are proposed by the local authority which are not consistent with the Land Use Plan as approved by the Commission, the proposed changes shall be submitted to

the Commission for study, hearing (as hereinafter provided), and recommendation prior to final decision by local zoning authority. The findings and recommendation of the Commission shall be returned to the local zoning authority upon the close of the Commission's Meetings (See Article VI). Recommendations will be made for changing the defined standards of a local zone whenever there is no local zone appropriate for the recommended restriction. The recommendation of the Commission shall be binding on the local zoning authority unless its governing body by at least a four-fifths vote overrules the Commission.

#### ARTICLE VI. MEETINGS

**ARTICLE 6.1 SCHEDULING.** Meetings shall be scheduled by the Commission to consider matters relevant to its duties and responsibilities when requested by the chairman, two or more of the Commission members, a local zoning authority, or as scheduled by the Secretary to the Commission in accordance with the timely processing of a "Request For Hearing" as outlined in Section 6.2 below. A hearing also may be scheduled when requested by any interested party that claims that a matter being considered by a local zoning authority, or that action taken by a local zoning authority, is not consistent with the Commission approved plan for an airport-influenced area. A request for hearing by an interested party shall be filed simultaneously with both the Commission and the local zoning authority. If the matter is under consideration by the local zoning authority, the Commission staff may request that the local zoning authority take no final action on the matter for a period of not less than 60 days in order to receive the Commission's recommendation.

**SECTION 6.2. PROCESSING OF HEARING REQUESTS.** Requests for hearing, except when initiated by the Commission in session, shall be submitted either on forms provided by the Commission or in letter form. The request shall fully and fairly state the reason for the request and shall detail property descriptions, maps and other material necessary to fully understand the matter for which a hearing is being requested. Within the fifteen working days immediately following the receipt of a request for hearing, the Commission's staff shall determine if the matter for which the hearing is being requested is within the purview of the Commission. If the matter is a proper subject for a Commission hearing, a date for the hearing shall be set, and the date for hearing shall be no more than 50 days following the original filing of the request for hearing.

**SECTION 6.3. HEARING NOTICE.** The date and subject matter of each hearing shall be "Noticed" by publication at least one time in a newspaper having general circulation in the part of the County in which the subject matter of the hearing is situated. The hearing notice shall be caused to be published at least ten working days prior to the date of the hearing. At the same time the published notice is submitted to the newspaper, a special notice shall be sent to the local zoning authority or person requesting the hearing and to all public agencies having an interest in the matter to be heard.

**SECTION 6.4. RULES OF HEARING.** The order of the hearings held by the Commission shall be:

- (a) Open hearing
- (b) Staff to present evaluation

- (c) Proponents to present case
- (d) Opponents to present case
- (e) Rebuttal by proponents
- (f) Any member of the Commission to call for such additional information, pros and cons, in the order he desires
- (g) Close hearing
- (h) Commission discussion and deliberation
- (i) Motions and voting

SECTION 6.5. QUORUM AND ACTION. Four members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of business. At least four affirmative votes shall be required for the Commission to take action on any motion.

ARTICLE VII. TEMPORARY DISQUALIFICATION OF COMMISSION MEMBERS.

SECTION 7.1 CONFLICT OF INTEREST. A Commission member shall disqualify himself from taking part in any discussion or in casting a vote on any matter in which the member, one of his immediate family, or a relative of the first rank has any substantial interest. He shall then temporarily vacate his seat on the Commission and may become either a proponent or an opponent of the matter then being heard.

SECTION 7.2 DISQUALIFICATION OF COMMISSION MEMBER BY CHALLENGE. The qualification of any member(s) to take part in the Commission deliberations and voting may be challenged by any party to the hearings. It shall be the duty of the Commission Chairman to evaluate the challenge and the testimony presented and then to rule upon the qualification of the challenged member. If the Chairman is the member so challenged, he shall immediately surrender his chair to the Vice Chairman, who will act as Chairman until the qualification of the challenged member has been decided.

ARTICLE VIII. COMMISSION'S STAFF MEMBERS. The Riverside County Airports Director shall serve as Secretary to the Commission and shall be its Administrative Officer. The members of the Airports Director's staff shall be available to serve as staff members of the Airport Land Use Commission in performing its functions.

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